

THE CLAIMS:

~~Please cancel claims 118-120 and the following new claims 121-140.~~

1-120. (Canceled)

121. (New) A rights-management method comprising the steps of:

receiving, at a first computer system, a request from a user to access electronic content, the electronic content having associated with it two or more alternative conditions for governing the use of the electronic content;

using at least one digital certificate associated with the user to select one of the conditions;

satisfying the condition; and

granting the user access to the electronic content.

122. (New) A method as in claim 121, in which the two or more alternative conditions include alternative requirements that payment information be sent to a second computer system before granting access to the electronic content.

123. (New) A method as in claim 121, in which the two or more alternative conditions comprise a specification of two or more alternative payment mechanisms.

124. (New) A method as in claim 123, in which one payment mechanism comprises a subscription.

125. (New) A method as in claim 121, in which a first condition comprises a first price for accessing the electronic content, and a second condition comprises a second price for accessing the electronic content.

FINNEGAN
HENDERSON
FARABOW
GARRETT &
DUNNER LLP

1300 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
202.408.4000
Fax 202.408.4400
www.finnegan.com

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126. (New) A method as in claim 125, in which the first condition further comprises an indication of a first class of users authorized to access the electronic content upon payment of the first price, and the second condition further comprises an indication of a second class of users authorized to access the electronic content upon payment of the second price.
127. (New) A method as in claim 121, in which a first condition comprises an indication of a first class of users authorized to access the electronic content upon satisfaction of the first condition, and a second condition comprises an indication of a second class of users authorized to access the electronic content upon satisfaction of the second condition.
128. (New) A method as in claim 127, in which the step of using at least one digital certificate associated with the user to select at least one of the conditions comprises:

examining a first digital certificate to determine whether the user belongs to the first class of users.
129. (New) A method as in claim 127, in which the step of using at least one digital certificate associated with the user to select at least one of the conditions comprises:

examining at least a first digital certificate and a second digital certificate to determine whether the user belongs to the first class of users.
130. (New) A method as in claim 127, in which the first class of users comprises members of a first department in an organization, and in which the second class of users comprises members of a second department in an organization.

FINNEGAN
HENDERSON
FARABOW
GARRETT &
DUNNER LLP

1300 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
202.408.4000
Fax 202.408.4400
www.finnegan.com

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131. (New) A method as in claim 121, in which a first condition comprises an indication of a first tax that must be paid to a first governmental entity upon purchase of access to the electronic content by a member of a first class of users, and a second condition comprises an indication of a second tax that must be paid to a second governmental entity upon purchase of access to the electronic content by a member of a second class of users.
132. (New) A method as in claim 131, in which the step of satisfying the condition comprises sending a payment information to a second computer system, the payment information including authorization to debit an account by an amount sufficient to pay the first tax.
133. (New) A method as in claim 132, in which the second computer system is operable to receive the payment information and send the first tax to the first governmental entity and a payment to an author or distributor of the electronic content.
134. (New) A computer program product stored on a computer-readable medium, the computer program product including instructions that, when executed by a computer system, cause the computer system to perform steps comprising:
 - evaluating at least one digital certificate associated with a user of the computer system to determine whether, and under which of two or more conditions, the user is authorized to access a piece of electronic content;
 - determining that the user is authorized to access the piece of electronic content upon satisfaction of a first condition; and

FINNEGAN
HENDERSON
FARABOW
GARRETT &
DUNNER LLP

1300 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
202.408.4000
Fax 202.408.4400
www.finnegan.com

granting the user access to the piece of electronic content upon satisfaction of the first condition.

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135. (New) A computer program product as in claim 134, in which at least some of the two or more conditions relate to payment.
136. (New) A computer program product as in claim 135, in which a first condition comprises a first price for accessing the electronic content, and a second condition comprises a second price for accessing the electronic content.
137. (New) A computer program product as in claim 136, in which the first condition further comprises an identification of a first class of users authorized to access the electronic content upon payment of the first price, and the second condition further comprises an identification of a second class of users authorized to access the electronic content upon payment of the second price.
138. (New) A computer program product as in claim 135, in which the first condition comprises an identification of a first clearinghouse for accepting payment for access to the electronic content, and the second condition comprises an identification of a second clearinghouse for accepting payment for access to the electronic content.
139. (New) A computer program product as in claim 134, in which a first condition comprises an identification of a first class of users authorized to access the electronic content upon satisfaction of the first condition, and a second condition comprises an identification of a second class of users authorized to access the electronic content upon satisfaction of the second condition.

FINNEGAN
HENDERSON
FARABOW
GARRETT &
DUNNER LLP

1300 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
202.408.4000
Fax 202.408.4400
www.finnegan.com

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140. (New) A computer program product as in claim 139, in which the instructions that cause the computer system to perform the step of evaluating at least one digital certificate associated with the user include instructions operable to cause the computer system to perform steps comprising:

evaluating a first digital certificate to determine the identify of the user;

evaluating a second digital certificate to determine whether the user belongs to the first class of users.

FINNEGAN
HENDERSON
FARABOW
GARRETT &
DUNNER LLP

1300 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
202.408.4000
Fax 202.408.4400
www.finnegan.com